

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Colombia

SUBJECT Assignment of 400 Marines to Barrancabermeja

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1. On 17 April 1953 the Shell Oil Company in Casabe, Colombia, was notified by the military commander that the government planned to send 400 marines to the Barrancabermeja area during the week of 19 April 1953. The military commander who reportedly received this information from Bogota, stated that the detachment was to act as a commando group along the river front to counter-attack any guerrilla activity in the area.
2. The military commander added that he did not have enough quarters to house the men at his post in Barranca, and that he was going to ask each of the oil companies operating in the area to house and feed a portion of the detachment. Shell has been requested to accept 100 marines at Casabe, and will have to enlarge its military quarters to accommodate the additional group. At present this company is housing and feeding approximately 120 soldiers at Casabe.

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Comment. In view of the need for well-trained forces in other regions of Colombia, it seems doubtful that the government would concentrate as many as 400 additional men in the Barrancabermeja area.

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